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SHREVEPORT MAN SENTENCED ON FEDERAL FIREARMS CHARGES

Firearm offender sentenced to spend more than 12 years in prison

Shreveport, Louisiana . . . United States Attorney Donald W. Washington announced that **CORNELL WILLIAMS**, age 28, of Shreveport, Louisiana, was sentenced yesterday by United States District Judge S. Maurice Hicks, Jr. to spend 147 months in prison for possession of a firearm and ammunition by a convicted felon and possession of a firearm during and in relation to a crime of violence.

WILLIAMS was indicted in March 2006 and charged with one count of possession of a firearm and ammunition by a convicted felon, one count of possession of a firearm during and in relation to a crime of violence, and one count of forfeiture. WILLIAMS pled guilty to the two firearm charges in November 2006 and agreed to abandon the firearm to the government.

The indictment stemmed from an investigation into the February 2005 attempted armed robbery of the Diamond Shamrock on Kings Highway in Shreveport. Testimony at the hearing established that WILLIAMS entered the store carrying a 9 mm rifle and went over to the security guard and took his firearm from him. WILLIAMS then proceeded to the cash register where he took money and cigarettes. The

security guard and WILLIAMS then got into a scuffle and WILLIAMS left the store. Officers located WILLIAMS and he was arrested and subsequently indicted on the above charges.

Sentencing in federal court is determined by the discretion of federal judges and the governing statute. Parole has been abolished in the federal system.

This case was prosecuted by the United States Attorney's Office as part of Project Safe Neighborhoods. Project Safe Neighborhoods is a nationwide program begun in 2001, and designed to reduce violence in our communities by aggressively using existing federal firearms laws. United States Attorneys, District Attorneys, Sheriffs, Police Chiefs, and state officials have created partnerships to address crimes involving firearms. Generally, any arrest involving a firearm is reviewed immediately by local, state and federal authorities to decide whether the case is best suited for prosecution under state or federal law, or a combination of both. Project Safe Neighborhoods is expected to lead to long prison terms for violent criminals, and a significant reduction in violent crime. To date, federal prosecutions under Project Safe Neighborhoods in the Western District of Louisiana have led to the incarceration of criminals responsible for violent crimes such as homicides, aggravated assaults, drug trafficking, robbery, carjacking and burglary.

This case was investigated by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives and the Shreveport Police Department, and was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Mary J. Mudrick.

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